

### Political science - Estonia

Vetik, Raivo

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Sammelwerksbeitrag / collection article

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#### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Vetik, R. (2002). Political science - Estonia. In M. Kaase, V. Sparschuh, & A. Wenninger (Eds.), *Three social science disciplines in Central and Eastern Europe: handbook on economics, political science and sociology (1989-2001)* (pp. 246-257). Berlin: Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-280968>

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Raivo Vetik

## Political Science – Estonia

Discussant: Vello Pettai

### 1. Analysis of the pre-1989 situation

Political Science is one of the youngest social science disciplines in Estonia, since there were no institutions or research in this field up to the mid-1980s. In Soviet times, ideological control of political ideas and studies related to political issues was strong, access to Western scholarship was restricted, and contacts with foreign political scientists were prohibited. Even compared with sociological research, which goes back to the 1960s, political science is a completely new phenomenon in Estonia. The discipline is taking its very first steps to define its research objects, methodological approaches, and role in public debate.

However, political and philosophical reasoning on nationalism, Estonia's place in the international system, and the modernization of Estonian society date back to the second half of the 19th century, when Estonia started its nation building project. Two key figures at the beginning of Estonian political thought were Carl Robert Jakobson and Jakob Hurt. The latter formulated an idea that has become a cornerstone of Estonian national ideology – “As a small nation, we can not become a big power, but we can become great in our culture.” (Hurt, 1989) Another key focus of Estonian national ideology has been the country's relationship to its big neighbors and conquerors – Russia and Germany. Oskar Loores maintains that Estonia's only viable geopolitical strategy is to maintain both openness and restrictions in its relationship to these two countries (Loores, 1937).

Beginning in 1995, a books series “History of Estonian Thought” started to publish key texts of this period of Estonian political thinking: Juhan Luiga (1996): *Mäss ja meelehaigus* (Rebellion and the Dollar); Ilmar Tõnisson (1999): *Emajõe ääres* (By Emajõgi); Jüri Vilms (1999): *Kahe ilma vahel* (Between the Two Worlds); Konstantin Päts (2000): *Eesti riik* (The Estonian State); Oskar Loores (2001): *Meie, eestlased* (We, Estonians), etc.

The Estonian state's small size, geopolitical position, and history have made nation building one of the main themes of Estonian political thought. In the European cultural space, there have been two different patterns of thinking on nation building – political-territorial and ethnic-cultural. In the West, nations emerged as a rule within already existing states. Underlying their identity were political principles evolved in the modern era, whereby the democratization of the social order was effected and the king's subjects became sovereign citizens. The state was conceived as an aggregate of citizens endowed with equal rights and residing in the given territory.

In Central and Eastern Europe, nations came into being under the conditions of foreign empires. That is why the carriers of nationalism were mainly language, culture, and traditions. These became tools to shape the new identity and to help people stand up against the foreign power. The right to national self-determination was construed as the right of nations, defined in ethnic-cultural terms, to have their own states.

Estonians have embraced the concept of a state proceeding from their cultural heritage and language. When the nation emerged in the 19th century, it was not political ideas but cultural resistance that shaped the understanding of nationhood. The promotion of Estonia's own language, its stock of cultural heritage, and the creation of new national traditions were highlighted against the pressure from the Russian Empire and the cultural dominance of the Baltic Germans. Later, in the Soviet period, too, cultural resistance was a natural strategy for Estonians to withstand the deleterious communist ideology. As a result, this tradition still affects many Estonians' thinking, even though the need for further modernization of the society and the external European

environment make it imperative to reconsider the role of ethnicity in the national ideology and to move toward politically understood nation-statehood.

In Soviet times, there were two different kinds of reflection on politics in Estonia. One direction was based on Estonia's occupation by the Soviet Union. The existing political regime was perceived as alien, threatening, and repressive. The phenomena of double consciousness, typical for many Central and East European countries (Hankiss, 1990), also developed among Estonians; this meant that loyalty to the communist regime was expected at work and in formal interactions, but dissatisfaction with and protest against the system were the dominant dispositions in informal circles of friends and family.

Second, Marxism-Leninism was an obligatory subject at all Estonian universities during the Soviet period. All graduates had to take courses and pass exams in this subject. Marxism-Leninism was divided into four sub-areas: philosophy (Dialectical and Historical Materialism), political economy (capitalist and socialist), the history of the communist party of the Soviet Union, and scientific communism. Each of the sub-areas was supposed to cover one or another aspect of the functioning of society and politics. In particular, scientific communism included a number of issues like the nationality question, the relationship between communist and capitalist world systems etc., that Marxist-Leninist ideology considered politically relevant topics even in the socialist period of the development of humankind.

About 150–200 people taught at the Marxism-Leninism departments of Estonian universities in the 1980s. Some of these people conducted research on political theory<sup>1</sup>. Some wrote interesting pieces about contemporary political issues in Estonia and the Soviet Union<sup>2</sup>. However, all of this remained on a very abstract level and was implemented in “hidden” language. Empirical studies and the political science approach *per se* were out of the question in those days.

Of the four sub-areas of Marxism-Leninism and their respective departments at the universities, the general public and students regarded only two as real “red subjects”. These were the history of the communist party of the Soviet Union and scientific communism. Taking these subjects was a kind of ritual obligation for students, and often even the lecturers themselves did not regard them seriously. On the other hand, the situation was quite different in the departments of philosophy and political economy. Much depended on a particular lecturer, his qualification, and his research interests. Some lecturers were highly esteemed by students, and their courses were among the most popular.

A characteristic feature at these departments was that lecturers' courses and research focused on problems as far removed as possible from Marxist issues, obviating the need to touch upon ideological controversies. However, one of the channels to get information about new theories and approaches to politics in the West was through Marxist sources criticizing Western thought. Lecturers and students used to read these texts with a “double eye”, trying to differentiate authentic information from the commentators' obligatory ideological surface.

The Department of Philosophy at Tartu University is a good example. Not only has the department survived and developed successfully in the 1990s, its leading figures (Eero Loone, Ülo Matjus, Rein Vihalemm) also finally managed to get their professorships after Estonia regained independence at the beginning of the 1990s. These scholars have been prominent figures in Estonian academia since then and are trying to relate the Estonian life-world to Western philosophy. On the other hand, unlike at the departments of philosophy at Estonian universities, there are virtually no survivors from the former departments of history of the communist party of the Soviet Union or from departments of scientific communism.

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of Western theories on people interested in political issues in these times. There were pre-war translations of a number of classical political texts, but their circulation was tightly restricted under the totalitarian regime. The same was true of new literature. At the end of the Second World War, the majority of Estonia's intellectual elite left for the West. In the next decades, they were quite active in their new home countries, keeping the ideas of Estonian statehood and independence alive. A number of Estonian-born social scientists were internationally

known: Ilmar Tammelo, Rein Taagepera, Aleksander Loit, etc. These people discussed and published on political ideas and issues, though most of their texts remained unavailable in Estonia. *Vaba Eesti tähistel* (At the Milestones of Free Estonia), published by the Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus in Tallinn in 2000, provides a good overview of some key Soviet-period texts by Estonian expatriates.

In this context, a specific characteristic of the Estonian dissident movement can be explained. Oppositional activities during the Soviet era had less to do with social scientists and social science concepts like democracy or liberalism than with cultural-ethnographic concepts and ideas. Particularly the idea of civil society and the problems related to civil initiative were interpreted much more vaguely in Estonia than in many other Central and Eastern European countries. One reason for this was that the latter countries maintained their national societies and some traditions of private property even during the socialist period, while in Estonia they were totally eliminated. The opposition movement in Central and Eastern Europe was largely based on the ideology of civil society, but in Estonia it was based mainly on the ideology of the ethnically understood nation-state. Thus, historical experience and cultural concepts contributed more than Western ideas did to the ideological climate of the opposition movement in Estonia during the Soviet era.

Social scientists' engagement in the movement oppositional to the communist regime in Estonia began in the course of Perestroika in the mid-1980s. In 1987, four prominent social scientists – Edgar Savisaar, Siim Kallas, Tiit Made, and Mikk Titma – published an open letter titled "IME" (Isemajandav Eesti, *Self-Governing Estonia*), which argued to establish a system of self-government in Estonia (Edasi, September 26, 1987). Later, a number of social scientists developed political ideas and a new political system in the country. For example, three scholars from the Institute of International and Social Studies in Tallinn were elected representatives to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1989, where they played a role in initiating the democratic processes that were to bring about the dissolution of the Soviet Union. A number of social scientists became members of the Estonian Parliament in later years.

## 2. Redefinition of the discipline since 1990

The first opportunities for political science research *per se* in Estonia emerged after 1985. In Gorbachev's era of openness and liberalization, it proved possible to reflect on ongoing political events, to get access to Western literature, and even to write PhD dissertations on democratic political processes.<sup>3</sup>

Estonian scholars began visiting Western universities and political science research centers at the end of the 1980s. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of external influence on the development of the political science discipline in Estonia in the following years. Scandinavian universities, particularly the departments of political science at the University of Oslo and the University of Aarhus, were the most important cooperation partners in the initial stage of the development of political science research and institutions in Estonia.

Many political science concepts, theories, approaches, and institutional patterns were directly copied from the experiences of these universities. Yet the term for the political science discipline itself was not coined in Scandinavia, but in Germany. As in some other post-communist countries, the term "political science" tended to be avoided because of its perceived closeness to the term "scientific communism". The new term "politology" was chosen to signal to the broader public and to scholars themselves a new beginning in Estonian political reflection and analyses.

But obviously it was not possible to have well-structured and developed political science research and institutions immediately in the first years of politology's existence in Estonia. Building up a new discipline has been time-consuming and sometimes even painful. The biggest problem has been lack of people interested in the subject. Historical and conceptual approaches, borrowed from the previous social science tradition, remained the most prominent paradigm in Estonian political science for quite a few years. To some extent, this remains true even now.

As a result of the first visits and conferences at the end of the 1980s, several joint research and exchange programs with Scandinavian universities were launched. For example, the Nordic-Baltic research project "The Politics of Transition in the Baltic States" started in 1990. It was financed by a grant from the Nordic Council of Ministers and involved about 40 scholars from the universities of Aarhus, Oslo, Umea, Tartu, Riga, and Vilnius. In 1992, an exchange program titled "Project Balticum" was launched at the Department of Political Science of the University of Oslo. This program became the most important development site for a number of Estonian political science people and institutions throughout the 1990s. Professor Arne Stokke was the key person behind the project. The political science communities in all three Baltic states have greatly appreciated his enthusiasm and commitment. A number of Baltic scholars commonly called the Oslo University "my second home" in the first half of the 1990s.

Numerous visits, staff and student exchanges, research, and other forms of cooperation were instrumental in gaining new professional skills, teaching materials, literature, and experience needed for the emerging political science discipline in Estonian universities and research institutes. Besides the major programs named above, quite a few other projects can be identified: the European Union TEMPUS project "Political Science in the Baltic States" (1992-1995), the European Union Euro-Faculty project (beginning in 1992 and still continuing), a grant from the Soros Foundation to develop Political Science and Public Administration teaching (1994-1995), a joint project with the University of Connecticut for the exchange of social scientists (1994-1997), etc. All these projects involved the Department of Political Science of Tartu University (Tartu Ülikool) as the main Estonian partner. Besides Tartu University, political science also started at the Tallinn Pedagogical University (Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool, TPU) as a major and at Tallinn Technical University (Tallinna Tehnikaülikool) as a minor specialization at the beginning of the 1990s.

A structural feature greatly influencing the launching and further development of the discipline is the smallness of the political science community in Estonia. Currently only about 40–50 persons are involved in political science teaching or research, and there were even fewer 5–6 years ago. The two main institutions in the field have been the Department of Political Science at Tartu University and the Institute of International and Social Studies of the Academy of Sciences<sup>4</sup>. These institutions represent well the most important achievements and problems in the development of political science in Estonia in the 1990s, so the next section first provides a detailed description of these institutions. Several new institutions were established in the mid-1990s, but these are still only beginning to define their place and role in Estonian political science.

#### *The Department of Political Science at Tartu University*

The Department of Philosophy and Political Science at Tartu University was established in Fall 1989. It was the result of the reorganization of the former Department of Philosophy, which was divided into two units, one of them focusing on political science. The staff of the department came mainly from the fields of philosophy, history, and law in other departments of Tartu University. In the first years, the department did not have its own students, but taught introductory courses in political science at the Faculties of Philosophy, Law, and Economics. However, the department's lecturers focused on different areas of political science research and, step by step, thematic specialization evolved in the department.

The process of specialization was chaotic as everyone chose his own research subject. Some fields of research and teaching – for example, problems related to ethnic conflict, nationalism, and nation building – proved more popular than others. This is because the ethnic issue has been a burning problem in Estonia since the end of the 1980s. The influence of Rein Taagepera and the Estonian translation of his "Seats and Votes" have made electoral systems a popular subject at the universities.

Since 1992, Professor Rein Taagepera<sup>5</sup>, an internationally known political scientist, has been one of the key figures in the development of political science in Estonia. He established a new Faculty of Social Sciences at Tartu University, including subunits of political science, sociology, and economics. As a result, the political science subunit from the Department of Philosophy and

Political Science moved from the Faculty of Philosophy to the new Faculty of Social Science and became an independent unit with students of its own.

The following numbers illustrate the institutional growth of the Department of Political Science at Tartu University in the period 1989-2000. In 1989, there were 4 staff members in the political science unit at the Department of Philosophy and Political Science, but there were no students majoring in political science. In 1993, the respective numbers were 5 and 50; in 1996, 6 and 85; and in 2000, 10 and 117. The department has developed a broad international cooperation network and regularly receives visiting professors from the West, via Fulbright or other exchange schemes.

An important structural development took place in 1995, when the department was divided into two units and the subunit of public administration established a separate institution, the Department of Public Administration and Social Policy. However, in Fall 2001, the university council decided that these two departments should have a joint BA program beginning in 2002. Considering the limited human and financial resources of a country like Estonia, such a pattern seems to best meet the aims of developing political science as a discipline and society's needs for political science graduates.

Estonian expatriates contributed to the development of the Department of Political Science at Tartu University. Rein Taagepera was the founder of the new Faculty of Social Sciences, as already mentioned. Two other active members of the department – Vello Pettai (a graduate of Columbia University) and Andres Kasekamp (a graduate of the University of Toronto) – have contributed Western educational background and research experience. Besides lecturing at Tartu University, Andres Kasekamp is also the coordinator of the Institute of Foreign Affairs, a newly established non-governmental institution in Tallinn.

The number of graduates in political science is still comparatively low in Estonia, and it is difficult to make generalizations about their prospects in the labor market. However, since Estonian public service has developed very fast since independence was regained, some graduates have been able to find good positions and launch remarkable careers. Political science graduates can also be found in Estonia's politics, media, and private sector. A new development is that MA degrees are becoming popular among Estonian public servants, creating a growing market for the departments of political science and public administration at both Tartu and Tallinn. Also, Estonia's accession to the EU is creating new needs for these majors. As a result, new challenges and opportunities for growth are emerging for these departments.

*The Institute of International and Social Studies at Tallinn Pedagogical University*

The Institute of International and Social Studies (IISS), founded in 1988 under the name of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, and Law, was a key political science research institution in Estonia in the 1990s. It was established as a specialized research institute for a country going through the processes of democratization and marketization. It was a time when political and economic reforms had begun in the Soviet Union and the independence movement was gathering momentum in Estonia. This situation made it possible to address issues and theories that had been forbidden for decades. For instance, the institute published documents concerning events related to the Soviet occupation of the Baltic states in 1939–1940.

Prior to the establishment of the IISS, the majority of its researchers had worked at the Institute of History (sociologists and philosophers) or at the Institute of Economics (jurists and political scientists) of the Academy of Sciences. In 1989, the Institute's first year of operation, it employed 85 people, including 39 scholars. About ten of them were directly engaged in political science and international relations research. During the 1990s, the IISS developed as an academic research and development institution in the fields of sociology, political science, and international relations; philosophers and lawyers left the institute. In 1998, in the framework of science reform in Estonia, the IISS joined Tallinn Pedagogical University.

IISS research work focuses on:

- Social Stratification and Mobility in a Changing Society: Generational Paths in Contemporary Estonia,

- Changing Values and Lifestyles in Estonia: Economic and Social Resources of Families,
- The Social Dimension of Euro-Integration and Perspectives of the Estonian Nation-State,
- Cultural Dialogue in Estonia: Ethnic, Regional, and Global Factors,
- Democratic Governance in Estonia: Problems and Solutions,
- International and Security Studies,
- Crime and Crime Prevention in Estonia.

In addition to research work, IISS scholars lecture at a number of universities in Estonia and abroad, perform consultancy work, and have helped prepare several Estonian state programs (for example "Integration of Estonian Society 2000-2007"). The institute has well-established research cooperation with Western institutions (Tampere University, Helsinki University, Jyväskylä University, Uppsala University, Oslo University, Michigan University, etc.). The institute cooperates with a number of governmental and non-governmental bodies and foundations in Estonia as well as with international organizations like the United Nations Development Agency, the United Nations Union, UNESCO, the Representative of the European Commission in Estonia, the OSCE representative in Estonia, etc.

#### *Department of Public Administration, University of Tartu*

The Department of Public Administration and Social Policy at Tartu University was founded in 1995. The department has since created Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD curricula. Currently there are 161 undergraduate students, 19 Master's students, and 15 PhD students in Public Administration. About 3/4 of more than 150 alumni work in public service; some of them have already reached the ranks of the senior civil service. A third of the alumni have continued their studies in Master's and PhD programs abroad.

The department's personnel consists of eight full faculty members; several foreign professors and senior civil servants have also offered individual courses since 1995. The Department has signed bilateral agreements for the exchange of undergraduate students with the University of Helsinki, the University of Maastricht, the University of Constance, the University of Jena, and the Institute of Administration in Braganca, Portugal.

The Department of Public Administration's research projects include the following topics: Public Administration as *Staatsswissenschaft*, Polis Theory, the Continental European Tradition of Public Administration and Its Application Today, Hermeneutic Theory of Bureaucracy, Comparative Civil Service Reforms, the Administration of Small States, Innovation, ICT and Industrial Policy, Fiscal Decentralization in Estonia and Europe, Non-Governmental Organizations, Critique of the New Public Management, the Separation of Powers, the Anthropology of Political and Administrative Systems, and Civil Service Career Patterns.

At the beginning of 2002, the Department of Public Administration and Social Policy faced a structural reform in which the Chair of Social Policy was moved to the Department of Sociology. The Department of Public Administration was enlarged by the creation of a Chair of Public Management. In the future, the Department of Public Administration will concentrate on the development of graduate programs, which means gradually shifting its focus from the undergraduate program to the MA and PhD programs.

#### *The Department of Government at Tallinn Pedagogical University*

The Department of Government at Tallinn Pedagogical University offers BA and MA curricula in political science and public administration. The predecessor of the Department of Government was the Department of Social Theory, which offered introductory courses in social sciences (sociology, political science, economics, etc.) at TPU. In 1994, a BA curriculum in public administration was established with the assistance of a TEMPUS program (1992–1995) carried out in cooperation with Manchester Metropolitan University (UK), University College Galway (IRL), and Tallinn Technical University.

In 1998, the Department of Social Sciences was renamed the Department of Government, while the chairs of sociology and population studies separated from the department and formed a new Department of Sociology. The department's staff consists of 11 full members, including two

professors. The department's Chairs of Comparative Politics and Public Policy were established in Spring 2001. According to the department's developmental plan, the Chair of Human Development and Public Management will be established in the coming years.

There are three research groups at the Department of Government. The research group on institutional policy includes seven persons (including MA students) and focuses on two research directions: the study of decision-making in government and the study of administrative policy in Estonia in the 1990s. The second research group consists of five researchers and research assistants and focuses on the politics of multiculturalism. The third research group on civic culture and civic education includes five researchers and research assistants and participates in various programs at the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievements.

### 3. Core theoretical and methodological orientations

The research work of Estonian political scientists in the early years of independence concentrated on the problems of post-communist states and societies in transition. Scholars carried out research on issues like nation building and ethnic politics, the reconstruction of civil society, post-communist cultural, social, and political transformations, international relations, etc.

The Marxist doctrine and approaches, which dominated theoretical and methodological orientations in Estonian political science for decades, had been totally abandoned by the beginning of the 1990s. There are practically no people from old Marxist-Leninist university departments left in Estonian academia. There has even been overreaction to past experiences. The majority of Estonian political scientists have regarded everything even remotely recalling left-wing ideology with suspicion. Such a state of affairs has had a detrimental impact on the balance and quality of public debate on societal and political issues, which has been one-sidedly liberal over the first ten years of building independence and a market economy in Estonia.

Table 1 shows that the continuing dominance of qualitative approaches still signals Estonian political science research's methodological underdevelopment. Not enough people in the political science community have been systematically taught research methods and educated in political science according to Western standards. Much is still on the amateur level. However, prospects of improvement are not bad, since two PhD Schools in Social Sciences (Tartu University and Tallinn Pedagogical University) have been established; they also offer joint courses.

### 4. Thematic orientation and funding

We have already mentioned cooperation with Scandinavian universities. The impact of the Scandinavian political science tradition can also be seen in the development of thematic orientations of political science in Estonia. A number of research projects were carried out in the 1990s under the direct leadership of the scholars like Anton Steen and Arne Stokke of the University of Oslo and Jan Ake Dellenbrant of the University of Umea. These projects focused on subjects like parliamentary government, inter-ethnic relations and nationalism, elite transformation, party formation and electoral behavior, etc. Such cooperation helped to shape the understanding of political science research and its methods, sources, and style.

Currently, Estonian comparative political scientists conduct studies on parties and party systems. Tiina Randviir and Rein Toomla (Raitviir, 1996; Toomla, 2000) have carried out the first studies of Estonian parties and elections. In the same field, Vello Pettai (Pettai and Kreuzer, 1999) has carried out a comparative analysis of election laws and a study of the various levels of institutionalization of parties in the three Baltic States. In the same field of research Rein Taagepera and Evald Mikkel (Taagepera, 1997, Taagepera, 1998, Taagepera; Grofman and Mikkel, 2000) have also investigated the effective number of parties, the election threshold in electing national representation bodies, and the development and genealogy of Estonian political



parties. Andres Kasekamp (2000) carried out a study of right-wing movements in the inter-war period in the Estonian political context.

The democratization of transitional societies in general and the examination of emerging civil society have received considerable attention. The most important of Andrus Park's works are collected in his memorial proceedings (Park, 1995). Jüri Ruus (Ruus, 1999) has analyzed the Estonian political elite and its attitude toward democracy in the transitional period. Rein Ruutsoo and Siisanen (1996) studied NGO-participation, citizen initiative, social capital, and growth difficulties in Estonia and other Baltic transitional societies. Rein Taagepera (Taagepera, 1998) also wrote a book on the political development of eastern Finno-Ugric peoples in the Russian Federation.

Estonian political scientists including Hallik (1996), Ruutsoo (1999), Vetik (1999), and Berg (2001) have written on inter-ethnic relations and ethnic policy. Raising the question of the type of democracy that fits re-independent Estonia most, Vello Pettai (1998) has examined the ethnic democracy model and its features. On the other hand, Raivo Vetik (2001) has focused on the model of multicultural democracy.

The changed international situation, traditional challenges, and new foreign policy orientations have given international relations and geopolitics a respectable place in the development of political science as a scientific discipline in Estonia. One central research topic has been security policy and particularly regional security in the Baltic Sea region (Vares and Haab, 1994; Jaanson, 1995; Berg and Oras, 2000).

Estonian political scientists have also been developing research in the field of public administration. At Tartu University, attention focuses on the theory and history of public administration, state service, organizational theory, the non-profit sector, and the administrative organs of small countries (Drechsler, 1999, Randma, 2001). At Tallinn Pedagogical University, research focuses on comparative studies of reforms of governing institutions and structures (Sootla, 1996).

A trend in Estonian political science has been to carry out applied research commissioned by the ministries and other government institutions as well as to take part in the preparation of state policy programs. One example of this is a research project carried out by Institute of International and Social Studies on national integration and multiculturalism: *Democratic Multiculturalism: a New Model of National Integration* (Vetik, 2001). This project became a conceptual base for the "Integration Program of Estonian Society 2000-2007" adopted by the Estonian government in March 2000.

There are two main sources of funding for political science research projects in Estonia. These are grants from the Ministry of Education (for 1–5 years) and the Estonian Science Foundation (for 1–3 years). These grants are meant to fund "fundamental research". The subjects of directly state-funded projects include: *Democratic Governance in Estonia: Problems and Solutions*, (Raivo Vetik), *Social Dimensions of European Integration and Perspectives of the Estonian Nation-State* (Aksel Kirch), and *Estonia in the System of International Relations* (Peeter Vares). The projects funded by the Estonian Science Foundation include: *Policy Networks and Elite Participation in Legislation. The Case of Estonia* (Jüri Ruus), *Geopolitical Reasoning and Discourse in Post-Soviet Estonia: Identity, Boundary-Producing Practices and Context* (Eiki Berg), *Political Institutions and Party Cohesion in the Baltic States* (Vello Pettai), and *1999 Estonian Riigikogu Elections* (Rein Toomla).

Along with the above two main internal sources, the Estonian government, the State Chancellery, the Chancellery of the Estonian Parliament, the Office of European Integration, and a number of other state institutions have been internal donors to political science research during the 1990s. These bodies have funded research related to the needs of everyday policy-making in Estonia, like the structure and functioning of central and local administration, Estonia's EU accession, political trust in state institutions, etc. Examples of cooperation between social scientists and public servants include the preparation of the yearly Estonian Human Development Reports

(since 1995), the Estonian Sustainable Development Report (in 2001), a future scenario “Estonia 2010”, etc.

A large share of funding of Estonian political science comes from cooperative projects with Western research institutions. There are projects funded by the EU 5th Framework Programme – for example the IISS is engaged in a major comparative project “Value Systems and Socio-Economic Conditions”, which includes 13 European countries. The Open Estonia Foundation, established by George Soros more than ten years ago, has also been a very important source of financing for smaller projects and research visits.

However, since the number of people engaged in political science is still very small in Estonia, many research areas are still uncovered. The Estonian state’s policy on financing science and development is a factor in this. For example, EU countries allocate an average 1.8% of GDP to R&D, but Estonia allocates only 0.6%, one of the lowest rates even among accession countries.

## 5. Public space and academic debates

The role of political scientists in public debate on social and political issues in Estonia grew remarkably during the 1990s. Some scholars have become opinion leaders whose comments and analyses are regularly sought by major newspapers and other media. They have contributed articles on burning issues of social stratification and poverty, trust in state institutions, nation building strategies, inter-ethnic issues, etc. The best example of the possibility to have an impact on the public agenda was an open letter from 26 Estonian social scientists in Spring 2001, published by all major media channels in Estonia (*Postimees*, April 23, 2001). The letter sought to draw attention to major problems in Estonian politics and society. The title of the open letter – *Two Estonias* – has become a keyword everyone in Estonia is aware of, since the media now use this metaphor daily in discussing various social and political problems.

There are no professional political science journals *per se* in Estonia. *A Monthly Survey of Baltic and Post-Soviet Politics* was published in the first half of the 1990s and had subscribers in many countries all over the world. It published the chronology of the most important political events, important political documents, and analysis of the political situation in the three Baltic States and in other parts of the former Soviet Union. However, the journal was shut down for financial reasons a few years ago. Another journal, *Trames – Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* (formerly published as *Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis* (Dorpatensis) B, established in 1893, and the proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, *Humanities and Social Sciences*, established in 1952) is an official publication of the Estonian Academy of Sciences and the Tartu University, founded in 1997. *Trames* publishes original scholarly and research papers from all fields of the humanities and social sciences. It is attempting to become the connecting footpath allowing free movement of thought between East and West (which tend to look at things differently). It is also a footpath toward a more open and free society as well as a mirror reflecting the social processes leading to such a society. *Trames* is peer-reviewed and is published quarterly in English, each issue comprising about 100 pages. The journal is sent to more than 200 libraries in the world.

In 1996, the Estonian Social Science Data Archives (ESSDA) were established at Tartu University. The actual work of this institution began even earlier. In 1993, a group of sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, and human geographers at Tartu University formed an initiative group to create a databank on social sciences and began to work out a corresponding development project. Relying upon the financial support of Tartu University, the group began transferring materials deposited in the Computing Center of Radio Estonia to magnetic disks. In Summer 1994, a project to create a databank was presented to the Open Estonia Foundation, or more specifically to the Higher Education Support Project. The application for support received a positive response, and a grant was awarded for the years 1994–1996. Currently, 214 data files from the years 1975–1994 have been transferred to the databank and 127 data files have been transferred to SPSS

format. Regular cooperation with foreign social science data archives has also started. The first and so far only issue of the journal *Estonian Social Science Online* (ESSO) was published on October 19, 1999. The journal was launched with the help of a grant received from the Open Estonia Foundation and is a part of the electronic resources of the ESSDA.

## 6. Views on further development

The main feature of the further development of political science discipline in Estonia is the consolidation of sustainable undergraduate and graduate programs at the universities and the improvement of the quality of research. The weakest element in current teaching is that instruction often remains only theoretical and abstract. It is mostly based on experiences and literature from Western countries, because there is little literature on local political issues. The latter can be brought into being only through research on local political issues and publication of the results, particularly in the framework of research-based MA and PhD programs, which have been established in recent years both in Tallinn and Tartu.

Another positive prospect is that a number of young Estonians are in the process of defending their PhDs at Western institutions (Heigo Kadakmaa at Uppsala University, Kristi Raik at Turku University, Piret Ehinat at the University of Arizona). It is to be hoped that they will return to Estonian universities and research institutes in the near future and will strengthen the prospects of the development of the political science discipline.

The role of external factors in developing Estonian political science has changed considerably in recent years. If ten years ago the main purpose of the foreign contacts was to get new ideas for research, teaching, and institution building, now the relationship is becoming more mutual. One of the new forms of cooperation is networking. For example, the "NordBalt" project includes about 30 people from the universities of Uppsala, Tallinn, Tartu, and Riga and aims to promote cooperation and contacts between MA and PhD students at these institutions.

Another new feature in Estonian political science is the use of public opinion surveys carried out by market research companies. It has become a usual pattern for political scientists to prepare the research instrument and, after conducting fieldwork, to carry out analyses of the data. This kind of cooperation has been financed by state institutions like the Chancellery of the Parliament, the EU Information Agency, etc.

Several large political science conferences organized in recent years have been a positive sign of the development of political science in Estonia. In 1998, the IISS in Tallinn organized an International Political Science Association regional conference "Perspectives of Democratic Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe" with participants from 14 countries from all over the world. Columbia University Press published a volume based on the conference papers (Berg-Schlosser and Vetik, 2001). In 2000, the IISS launched the Estonian Social Science Annual Conference series, with two conferences so far and two volumes published based on abstracts of the papers (Vetik, 2000; Berg, 2001). This forum has the potential to become the most important annual social science event in Estonia.

Last but not least, new non-governmental institutions engaged in policy analyses have emerged in Estonia. First, in 2000 the non-governmental think tank "Praxis" was established. This institution focuses on public policy issues like the evaluation of the effectiveness of the labor market, local government investment funds, etc. The aforementioned Institute of Foreign Affairs in Tallinn, which is still in an embryonic stage of development, also represents non-governmental organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Rem Blum at Tartu University developed a theory of revolution and the concept of alienation.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Gustav Naan, 1969.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the author of this report defended his PhD thesis on John Rawls' theory of justice in 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Since 1998 affiliated to the Tallinn Pedagogical University.

<sup>5</sup> He was also professor of political science at the University of California at Irvine.

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Table 1 Methodological orientations

	Behaviorism	Comparative approach	Cybernetics	Existentialism	Hermeneutics	Marxism	Rational choice theory	Game theory	Functionalism	Historical approaches	Phenomenology	System theory	Organizational theory	Neo-Institutionalism	Others: Constructivism
TUES, Institute of International and Social Studies		X							X	X		X	X	X	
University of Tartu, Department of Political Science		X					X			X		X		X	X
University of Tartu, Department of Public Administration	X	X			X					X			X		
TUES, Department of Government		X							X	X		X	X	X	